

and secondary school age in the continental United States and overseas.

(b) SEVERELY WOUNDED OR INJURED MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.—Of the amount authorized to be appropriated by section 1405(5) for operation and maintenance for Defense-wide activities, \$500,000 may be available for the Reading for the Blind and Dyslexic program of the Department of Defense for severely wounded or injured members of the Armed Forces.

AMENDMENT NO. 4214

(Purpose: To make a technical correction to a project for Rickenbacker Airport, Columbus, Ohio)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

RICKENBACKER AIRPORT, COLUMBUS, OHIO

SEC. _____. The project numbered 4651 in section 1702 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (119 Stat. 1434) is amended by striking "Grading, paving" and all that follows through "Airport" and inserting "Grading, paving, roads, and the transfer of rail-to-truck for the intermodal facility at Rickenbacker Airport, Columbus, OH".

AMENDMENT NO. 4519

(Purpose: To make technical corrections to a high priority project and transportation improvement project in the State of Michigan)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. HIGHWAY PROJECTS, DETROIT, MICHIGAN.

(a) HIGH PRIORITY PROJECT.—The table contained in section 1702 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (119 Stat. 1256) is amended in the item numbered 4333 (119 Stat. 1422) by striking "Plan and construct, land acquisition, Detroit West Riverfront Greenway" and inserting "Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, Riverfront walkway, greenway, and adjacent land planning, construction, and land acquisition from Gabriel Richard Park at the Douglas Mac Arthur Bridge to Riverside Park at the Ambassador Bridge, Detroit".

(b) TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.—The table contained in section 1934(c) of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (119 Stat. 1485) is amended in the item numbered 196 (119 Stat. 1495) by striking "Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, West Riverfront Walkway, Greenway and Adjacent Land Acquisition, from Riverfront Towers to Ambassador Bridge, Detroit" and inserting "Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, Riverfront walkway, greenway, and adjacent land planning, construction, and land acquisition from Gabriel Richard Park at the Douglas Mac Arthur Bridge to Riverside Park at the Ambassador Bridge, Detroit".

AMENDMENT NO. 4197

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today along with my colleague Mrs. Lincoln to discuss an amendment accepted today by the distinguished chairman Mr. WARNER, and ranking member, Mr. LEVIN.

I appreciate their willingness to advance this very important legislation. Our policy must reflect our Nation's care and appreciation for our veterans, and I will continue to work towards obtaining full concurrent receipt. I have said it before, but I will say it again.

It is unacceptable that the men and women who dedicated their entire careers to service in the military must

surrender a portion of their retired pay if they want to receive the disability compensation.

It is acceptable, but today, because of the policy of concurrent receipt, it is the law for veterans classified as unemployable.

Throughout my time in the Senate, I have championed legislation that would end the unfair policy of denying America's disabled veteran's retirement benefits they have earned through years of service and sacrifice.

In 2004, I introduced legislation that was passed into helping those veterans who were 100 percent disabled to receive full concurrent receipt immediately. By eliminating the 10-year phase-in period, the passage of this legislation was a significant victory for those who have fought for our freedom.

But, I never imagined that the administration would intentionally change the intent, interpret the law, and shamelessly deny unemployable veterans, no matter what their disability rating, retirement pay and disability compensation.

What kind of message does this send to our men and women in the military today?

We have thousands of new American veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. These men and women serve in the most inhospitable reaches of the world, defending our freedoms and fighting for the cause of liberty.

Most of these young American Veterans don't realize that if they are injured or wounded to the point where they can no longer work, will have to choose between their retired pay and their disability compensation. As of today, they will not receive both until 2009.

This is unfair.

Military retired pay is earned compensation for the extraordinary demands and sacrifices inherent in a military career. It is a reward promised for serving two decades or more under conditions that most Americans find intolerable.

For several years I have introduced and championed legislation that would end the unfair policy of denying America's disabled veterans' retirement benefits they have earned through years of service and sacrifice.

In November 2005, an amendment was passed to expand concurrent receipt to cover America's disabled veterans rated as "unemployable," and to implement the new policy immediately instead of phasing it in over a decade. However, I was disappointed that the conference committee chose not to enact this valuable legislation until 2009.

Therefore, I introduced this amendment to restore their full benefits as originally intended in the legislation I introduced in 2004.

Veterans' disability compensation is recompense for pain, suffering, and lost future earning power caused by a service-connected illness or injury. Few retirees can afford to live on their retired

pay alone, and a severe disability only makes the problem worse by limiting or denying any post-service working life.

Mr. President, an "unemployable" retiree should not have to forfeit part or all of his or her earned retired pay as a result of having suffered a service-connected disability.

At a time when our Nation is calling upon our Armed Forces to defend democracy and freedom, we must be careful not to send the wrong signal to those in uniform.

All who have selected to make their career in the U.S. military now face an additional unknown risk in our fight against terrorism. If they are injured, they would be forced to forego their earned retired pay in order to receive their VA disability compensation. In effect, they would be paying for their own disability benefits from their retirement checks unless my legislation is enacted.

This will send a signal to these brave men and women that the American people and government take care of those who make sacrifices for our nation. It is time for us to show our appreciation to the men and women who have demonstrated their allegiance to their country and the principles it stands for.

I, again, thank Senator WARNER and Senator LEVIN for their assistance in including this provision in the fiscal year 2007 Defense authorization bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 4494

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss my concerns about the amendment offered by my good colleague Senator BURNS, regarding electronic voting technology to S. 2766, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007.

I understand that this amendment directs the Department of Defense, DOD, to continue the interim voting assistance system, IVAS, for uniformed service voters, overseas Defense Department employees, and dependents of such voters and employees, for all Federal elections through December 31, 2006. The amendment would not, as I understand it, extend the current program to nonmilitary overseas voters. Further, I understand that the amendment directs the DOD to submit two reports to Congress, one assessing the IVAS program during the 2006 Federal elections and the second detailing plans for an expansion of the IVAS program to all voters covered under the Uniform Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, UOCAVA, through November 2010.

I commend my colleague from Montana for his efforts to protect the fundamental right to vote and for extending a critical program that facilitates electronic ballot access for our valiant overseas service men and women, their colleagues and families. I strongly support the goals of this legislation.

However, I am deeply concerned that the amendment as drafted continues to